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The Family of Lemuel T. Porter

Of Alabama.

1963

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M E M O R A N D U M

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The Family of Lemuel T. Porter, of Alabama

The purpose of this Memorandum is to assemble in one place the few facts that I have been able to collect thus far concerning LEMUEL T. PORTER. Copies of the Memorandum will be distributed to organizations and individuals who, in the course of their work, may be able to throw light on Porter's ancestry. The Porter research was undertaken for my friend, Mrs. Robert F. Lycette (née Evelyn Gertrude Bates), of Chillum, West Hyattsville, Maryland. Milton Rubincam, 6303 - 20th Avenue, Green Meadows, W. Hyattsville, Maryland.

Jesse Weaver Bates (Mrs. Lycette's father) wrote the following note concerning his maternal grandfather:

> "Granddad Porter fought in the Rebel Army. Never would talk of his past life. But Grand mother Porter said that he was of the old Ironside(s) Porter Family and they disowned him because he married her, a half Cherokee Indian".

According to available evidence (Federal census records), LEMUEL T. PORTER was born somewhere in South Carolina in or about the year 1833 The first documentary record I can find for him is in the 1860 census enumeration of Cherokee County, Alabama (Alabama Federal Census, 1860, volume 3, page 356):

> LEMUEL T. PORTER; aged 27; farmer; real estate valued at $100; personal estate valued at $150; born in South Carolina.
> SARAH PORTER; aged 16; born in Georgia.
> SARAH PORTER; aged 1/12 (i.e. one month); born in Alabama.

This census enumeration was dated 14 August 1860; Sarah, daughter of Lemuel and Sarah Porter, was thus born in July 1860, if her age of one month is correct.

The captured Confederate records in The National Archives, Washington, D. C., reveal that Lemuel L. (sic!) Porter was enlisted on 10 August 1861, by Captain James H. Savage, at Coloma (Cherokee County), Alabama, for a period of three years. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in Company I, 19th Regiment Alabama Volunteers. As L. Porter he appears on the Regimental Return for January 1862 (he was recorded as being present). As L. T. Porter he is on the Regimental Return in February and March 1862, being marked on both occasions as "Present". Lieutenant

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Lem T. Porter is shown as being "Present" on the June 1862 Regimental Return, but he does not appear again on this Return until November 1862.

At this point in his military career, events caught up with him with astonishing swiftness and he found himself out of the Army more precipitately than he had entered it. The tale of his unexpected departure from the Service is told in precise military language in General Order No. 15, dated at Head Quarters, Army of Tennessee, Murfreesboro, 13 December 1862. A General Court Martial for Polk's Corps was held at Murfreesboro, 1 December 1862, under the presidency of Colonel Joseph H. Lewis, 6th Kentucky Regiment. Second Lieutenant Lemuel T. Porter, Company I, 19th Regiment Alabama Volunteers, was charged with "Conduct unbecoming an Officer and a gentleman". Three specifications were levelled at him, namely:

> (1) On 10 November 1862, while on duty as Officer in charge of the picket guard, he did, in contravention of the Articles of War, and the regulations of the Army, play at cards with the said guards (we are unintentionally poetic here!), then under his command. To make matters worse, the men with whom he was enjoying a quiet little game were privates and non-commissioned officers. He was found in this compromising position by the Field Officer of the day during his morning rounds, or previous to 12 noon of the said day.
>
> (2) On 10 November 1862, the said Second Lieutenant Lemuel T. Porter was found playing cards with the guard of his command during his and their hours of duty by the Acting Field Officer of the Day. The record continues, in Army style, that he "did so continue to play, and remain so wrapt in the conduct of the game as to totally fail to receive said field officer of the day in the manner prescribed by the Army Regulations and the various Acts of Congress and laws passed in reference thereto, not even turning out and forming his guard, until he was commanded and instructed so to do, and how to do by the then acting field Officer of the day".
>
> (3) On 10 November 1862, Second Lieutenant Porter "did play at cards for money with the non-commissioned officers and privates of said guard, Then and there on duty, and under his command. All of this & these having been taken place and transpired at camp near Tullahoma Tenn on or about the 10th day of Nov A.D.1862".

It is obvious that the tenth day of November A.D. 1862 was a busy day for both Lieutenant Porter and the Field Officer of the Day. Porter pleaded guilty to all specifications of the charge, and therefore the Court found him guilty,, "And do therefore sentence the said 2 Lt. Lemuel T. Porter, Co. 'I' 19th Regt Ala Vols to be dismissed the service and have his name stricken from the Rolls".

I tried to find Lieutenant Porter in the 1870 census of Alabama, but without success. It will be recalled that he enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1861 at Coloma; the only family of the name in that region (post office listed as Coloma) was the following (Alabama Census, 1870, volume 4, page 329, family no. 27): J. Porter, female, aged 45, housekeeper, real estate valued at $500, personal estate at $658, born in South Carolina; William E. Porter, aged 20, farm hand, born in South Carolina; Mary A. Porter, 16, born in South Carolina; Munroe Porter, 14, born in South Carolina and W. Porter, female, aged 14, born in South Carolina. The fact that these Porters all came from South Carolina (recorded as the birthplace of Lemuel) may be significant.

Jesse W. Bates wrote that his mother, Sarah, was born in Jackson County, Alabama, in 1872. A search was made of the Jackson County 1870 census (volume 10); several Porter families were found but nothing came to light [illegible] Lemuel T. Porter. The 1870 enumerator for Jackson County was careless; his record contains a number of gaps --- vacant houses, homes where people were away and he apparently never went back to see them, etc. If Lemuel had moved from Cherokee to Jackson by 1870, he may very well have been one of the families missed by the census taker.

However, he does show up ten years later (Alabama Census, 1880, Jackson County, p. 266, Microfilm Roll No. 16, in The National Archives). He was living in Township 5, Range 6, Enumeration District No. 124, and by this time he had a large family:

FAMILY NO. 65:

LEMUEL P. (sic!) PORTER; aged 44; farmer; born in South Carolina; birthplaces of his parents not shown.

SARAH A. PORTER; aged 37; wife; keeping house; born in Alabama; parents' birthplaces not shown.

MARY E. PORTER; aged 15; daughter; works on farm; born in Alabama; father born in South Carolina, mother in Alabama.

aged) 13;) FRANKLIN E. (or S.?) PORTER; in relationship column "daughter" is crossed out but is not replaced by the word "son"; born in Alabama; father born in South Carolina, mother in Alabama. He was also a farm worker. His first name is smeared, but seems to be Franklin; his middle initial could be "E" or "S".

THOMAS M. PORTER; aged 12; in the relationship column "daughter" is crossed out but the word "son" is not substituted therefor; works on farm; born in Alabama; father born in South Carolina; mother in Alabama.

SARAH E. PORTER; aged 9; daughter; born in Alabama; father was born in South Carolina, mother in Alabama.

KAFORAST (??) PORTER; aged 6; son; born in Alabama; father born in South Carolina, mother in Alabama. I pondered his name a long time, but the only thing I could come up with was Kaforast.

ALACE (Sic!) J. PORTER; aged 5; daughter; born in Alabama; father born in South Carolina, mother in Alabama.

SAMUEL J. T. PORTER; aged 2; son; born in Alabama; father born in South Carolina, mother in Alabama.

JOSEPHINE PORTER; aged 1 month; born in April (this can not be right, as the census was taken on 7 June 1880; the child was born either in May or it was over one month old).

The 1880 census differs from the previous ones by the columns describing the relationships of members of the household to the heads of families, and the columns for recording the States of birth of members of the family. It is rather curious that the birthplaces of the parents of Mr. and Mrs. Porter were not given; it does not seem likely that neither would know where their parents first saw the light of day.

It will be noted that in the 1860 census Lemuel and Sarah Porter had a daughter Sarah who was then aged one month. In 1880 they had a daughter, Sarah E., who was nine years old. It is apparent that the first child died young, and that Sarah E. was named for her deceased sister.

The next record we have is dated nearly a quarter of a century later. The files of the Military Records Division, Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama (where I did some research on Wednesday, 7 August 1963), reveal that on 3 July 1903, L. T. Porter, of Jackson County, Alabama, drew up an affidavit. He stated that he enlisted as a Lieutenant in Company I, 19th Alabama Regiment, in August 1861 (no day given) at Coloma, Alabama. He was honorably discharged in May (no day stated) 1865. He did not desert the service of the Confederate States of America or the State of Alabama. He was unable to make a living by manual labor on account of old age and debility. At the time of filing his application he was 70 years old. His post office address was stated to be Hitch, Alabama. This document was sworn to before E. R. Smith, N.D., Pension Examiner, and witnessed by L. H. Gomes.

The schedule of property filed with the affidavit mentioned 47 acres in Jackson County, valued at $100. The description of improvements listed one cabin and seven acres cleared. Porter's personal property was stated to be:

Horses ----------	1, valued at -----	$30.00
Hogs, sheep, goats-	2, valued at -----	3.00
Clock ----------	1, valued at -----	1.50
Household & kitchen furniture --------		25.00
Mechanical & farming tools& implements-		3.00
TOTAL:-----		$62.50.

Mr. Porter's application for relief was considered by the Jackson County Pension Board at Scottsboro, Alabama, on the same day (6 July 1903): "We have examined into this applicants claim and find that his war record is unexceptionable, that he has only a small mountain place of 47 acres of land only 7 acres cleared --- that he is broken down in health, a cronic (sic!) sufferer from rheumatism and is in every way entitled to be placed in class 4 --- and so recommends". This document was signed by E. R. Smith, M.D. and S. H. McMahan. On 13 August 1903, the State Board of Examiners ordered him to be placed in class 4 under the act of 10 February 1899, and gave him a small pension.

The Pension Examiners declared that Porter's record was "unexceptionable"; we would say it was exceptionable --- what other soldier, in any war, was pensioned after being discharged from the Service for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman and violation of the Articles of War??? In his affidavit he asserted he had served in the Confederate Army as a lieutenant in the 19th Alabama Regiment until May 1865. Either he had a lapse of memory and did not recall the events of December 1862, or, as his great-granddaughter (for whom this record is compiled) suggests,he made this statement with tongue-in-cheek.

It was suggested to me by my friends in Alabama in August 1963, when I told them Lieutenant Porter's story, that after his dishonorable discharge he re-enlisted in the Army. However, neither the Confederate military records in The National Archives in Washington or the Alabama Department of Archives and History at Montgomery have a record of re-enlistment. When I discussed this problem in Washington later in the month with Dr. Jean Stephenson, she also suggested a re-enlistment, pointing out that in 1864 the South's manpower was at a low ebb and the Confederacy was desperate for men. Consequently,

he may have been taken back into the Service in spite of his dishonorable discharge. But there is no record of such action. The Military Records Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History, has two cards on L. T. Porter, Lieutenant, Company I, 19th Alabama Regiment. One card has the notation that he "resigned in 1863" (this obviously is an error) and the other states that he was discharged in December 1862 and the original record was sent to General (Joseph) Wheeler, 10 August 1869. General Wheeler was the 19th Alabama's first Colonel in 1861. He was captured at the close of the Civil War, subsequently studied law, was elected to Congress in 1880, and served as Major-General of United States Volunteers in the Spanish-American War. The reason for sending Lieutenant Porter's record to Wheeler in 1869 is not known, unless he was engaged in assembling records on Confederate soldiers under his command.

Other than the request for pension in 1903, the Alabama Department of Archives and History seems to have no records relating to Lemuel T. Porter and his family. Further research will have to be undertaken in Cherokee and Jackson Counties, in North Alabama.

S U M M A R Y

LEMUEL T. PORTER. Born in South Carolina, circa 1833 (aged 27 in 1860, 70 in 1903, although the 1880 census gives his age as 44, which would place his birth in 1836). Living at Hitch, Jackson Co., Ala., 1903. Married SARAH A_____, born in Alabama circa 1843 or 1844 (aged 16 in 1860, 37 in 1880). I s s u e:

1. SARAH; b. July 1860; d. before 1880.
2. MARY E.; b. 1865 (aged 15 in 1880).
3. FRANKLIN E. (S.?); b. 1867 (aged 13 in 1880).
4. THOMAS M.; b. 1868 (aged 12 in 1880).
5. SARAH E.; b. Jackson Co., Ala., 4 May 1872 (according to her son, although she was recorded as being 9 years old in 1880); m. Scottsboro, Jackson Co., Ala., 20 Sept. 1886, SAMUEL BATES (b. Lumpkin Co., Ga., 25 July 1862.) Son, JESSE WEAVER BATES, b. Jackson Co., Ala., 10 Sept. 1887; m. Franklin Co., Tenn., 4 Dec. 1910, MARY ELLIS STEELMAN (b. White Co., Tenn., 21 Dec. 1890, d. Huntington, W.Va., 5 Aug. 1958). 9 children, of whom EVELYN GERTRUDE BATES was b. Fonde, Ky., 7 Aug. 1922; m. (1) Hardy, Ky., 23 Dec. 1940, HARRY DOUGLAS BROOKS (div. Princeton, W. Va., 1946), & (2) Rockville, Md. 19 Jan. 1947, ROBERT FINCH LYCETTE. Issue: THOMAS NATHAN BROOKS, b. Bluefields, W.Va., 31 Aug. 1942, m. April 1963, ARLENE RICHARSON), and (2) PHYLLIS JEAN LYCETTE (b. Washington, D. C., 23 Aug. 1954).
6. KAFORAST (?); b. 1874 (aged 6 in 1880).
7. ALICE J.; b. 1875 (aged 5 in 1880).
8. SAMUEL J. T.; b. 1878 (aged 2 in 1880).
9. JOSEPHINE; b. in April or May 1880.

There may have been other children who died young between the census years, or who were born after 1880.

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